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The impact of positive organisational behaviour on employee engagement and performance

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Abstract: Studies over the decades have shown varying relationships between employee engagement, organisational commitment, and performance (Prathiba, 2016; Tugade and Arcinas, 2023). While there are many studies on organisational commitment, intent to leave an organisation, employee performance, and business unit performance, there is no recent quantitative study specifically on the relationships between employee engagement, motivation, performance, and positive organisational behaviour. The results established strong relationships among organisational culture, performance, employee engagement, and employee satisfaction, which showed significant relationships. There were especially strong correlations between satisfaction and life purpose and building friendships at work with achieving life's purpose.

This study has established the value of having strong relationships at work to build organisational cultures that foster ways to develop more effective teams, create a higher level of engaged workforce, and improve performance. The results show that even though employees are engaged, they are still maintaining options for exploring different professional opportunities, emphasising the necessity for organisations to focus on retaining key talent. POB can improve workplace dynamics by creating a healthier and more productive environment. This approach can boost employee morale, enhance job satisfaction, and strengthen team effectiveness.

Keywords: positive organisational behaviour; employee effectiveness; organisational performance; employee engagement; employee morale; human resource management; human resources.

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Matthew Hurtienne is committed to improving organisational performance through educational training and instructional strategies. With over 20 years of experience in union-management relations, strategic planning, and human resources, he has collaborated with both non-profit and for-profit organisations. As a Full Professor, he teaches doctoral courses focused on organisational change, behaviour, and research methods. He also serves as a research chair for doctoral candidates. He earned his PhD in Human Resources, focusing on Organizational Learning, Performance, and Change from Colorado State University, a Master of Science in Organizational Leadership from Norwich University in Northfield, VT, and a Bachelor of Science from Southern Illinois University.

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1 Introduction

Studies over the decades have shown varying relationships between employee engagement (EE), organisational commitment, and performance (Prathiba, 2016; Tugade and Arcinas, 2023). While there are many studies on organisational commitment, intent to leave an organisation, employee performance, and business unit performance, there is no recent quantitative study specifically on the relationships of EE, motivation, performance, and positive organisational behaviour that looks at the current workforce. This study aims to identify new ways that the field of human resource development (HRD) can unleash our workforce's expertise and potential (Swanson and Holton, 2009).

The expansion of the positive psychology movement has intensified the focus on enhancing and measuring positive human resource strengths and psychological capacities, which can be developed and effectively managed to improve organisational performance (Luthans and Church, 2002). This study uses positive organisational behaviour (POB) to mediate EE, motivation, and individual performance relationships.

POB includes concepts of "confidence/self-efficacy, hope, optimism, subjective well-being/happiness, and emotional intelligence" (Narayanamma et al., 2022). Hurtienne et al. (2022, p.15) listed the specific criteria of "being positive, unique, measurable, capable of being learned and developed, and manageable for performance improvement."

"Engagement/commitment is an organizational approach intended to guarantee that employees are dedicated to their organization's objectives and principles, encouraged to donate to organizational success, and can simultaneously improve their sense of safety. Employee engagement is vital in any organization as it relates to output, job satisfaction, etc. Engagement occurs when enough people care about doing a good job and what the organization does." [Narayanamma et al., (2022), p.3560]

Furthermore, “studies show that higher employee engagement positively affects employee motivation, satisfaction, productivity, and, ultimately, the financial success of the organization” [Eldor and Vigoda-Gadot, (2017), p.527]. However, EE levels have declined in recent years (Ramlall et al., 2021). “Employee engagement should be viewed as a process that will require nurturing and ongoing interactions with employees” (Hurtienne and Hurtienne, 2024).

The push towards a more positive organisation focuses on constructive attitudes, behaviours, and situations to maximise employee potential. A study by Tugade and Arcinas (2023, p.137)

“Showed that the level of employee organizational commitment positively and significantly correlates with employee engagement. This means that organizational commitment is directly proportional to employee engagement. Hence, as an employee’s commitment to the organization increases, so does their engagement at work. Also, results showed that the level of employee engagement and happiness have strong significant correlations and are directly proportional. Therefore, as employees’ engagement at work increases, their happiness at work increases.”

Given the purpose of this paper, the research team reviewed the literature on EE, POB, positive psychology, employee motivation, and the relationships to happiness, well-being, and employee performance. This study includes more than 450 participants. Quantitative measures are utilised to assess the relationships between work and happiness, positive organisational practices and EE, positive organisational culture and firm performance, and positive employee traits and employee performance. The study of POB relationships to engagement and performance offers valuable insights into how organisations can cultivate a positive work environment, enhance employee well-being, and achieve sustainable performance excellence. By continuing to advance our understanding of these relationships and translating research findings into actionable strategies, organisations can create workplaces where employees thrive, organisations prosper, and both individuals and the organisation flourish in tandem.

1.1 Statement of research problem

With hyper-competition globally, the ability of organisations to understand and influence employee behaviours that will lead to higher performance is paramount. The conditions of employee performance are inseparable from factors that can affect it (Mirda and Prasetyo, 2022). Employees are less engaged (Park et al., 2023). Employee present significant challenges for organisations because of the intense global competition and the limited availability of qualified talent in today’s market (Cruz et al., 2022). Given the organisational problems of a lower level of EE, a higher rate of intent to quit an organisation, less organisational citizenship, and a perceived lesser quality of work-life, it is expected performance at the individual, team, and organisational levels will decrease. This paper examines the impact of positive organisational practices on EE, retention, and performance, which can lead to interventions for increased success.

1.2 Research benefit

Given the limited availability of qualified talent, employees are widely considered an organisation’s most valuable asset and crucial to its success (Cruz et al., 2022). “To

minimize replacement costs and disruptions to organizational functions, organizations must focus on retaining their talent, thereby enhancing their ability to provide superior services to clients and learners” [Cruz et al., (2022), p.16]. With the research findings, this research adds to the existing literature and enables organisational leaders to further understand the value of POB and the impact on employee behaviours and leadership development, as well as for leaders and managers to more effectively understand and lead teams. A more deliberate focus on organisational culture that builds on POB will be informed through this research. HRM, HRD, leadership, and general management practices could be derived from the results to guide more positive and effective people strategies, leading to performance improvement at the individual, team, process, and organisational levels.

In addition to industry partners, faculty and students will have a deeper understanding of the relationships among the respective variables, which they can integrate with learning resources to inform undergraduate and graduate management students further. The research will help to fill a magnitude of voids in the current management literature.

2 Literature review

2.1 Employee engagement

The field of human resource development (HRD) utilises research and practitioner knowledge to discover methods to help develop employees to their fullest (Swanson and Holton, 2009). “If we consider employee engagement as the amount in which employees are willing to invest in the organization’s success, we can recognize the value for HRD within the concept”.

“As with many other HRD interventions, EE should be viewed as a process that will require nurturing and ongoing interactions with employees” [Hurtienne et al., (2022), p.15]. By discovering positive organisational behaviour factors that can impact EE, practitioners can develop EE plans where their organisations can see increased EE.

POB fosters a workplace culture that enhances EE. When organisations strive to improve EE, they will see a workforce more willing to work toward that organisation’s mission, vision, and KPIs (Hurtienne et al., 2022). Instead of concentrating on operational deficiencies, developing a supportive environment helps to enhance culture and bolster employee skills and strengths. These steps will employ motivation, job satisfaction, and organisational commitment, which can also positively impact EE (Luthans, 2003; Monica and Krishnaveni, 2018; Tugade and Arcinas, 2023). Emphasising the creation of a positive and inclusive work atmosphere, leveraging individual strengths to support the organisational mission, nurturing essential psychological capabilities, and encouraging open communication can create an environment where employees feel valued, motivated, and fully engaged with the organisational goals (Dasgupta and Gupta, 2019). Ultimately, this commitment leads to increased productivity, enhanced innovation, and improvements in overall organisational performance and employee job satisfaction (Dev and Sengupta, 2017; Zaman et al., 2011).

2.2 Purpose of work and the relationship to satisfaction, commitment, and performance

By examining the construct of employee work engagement, researchers have discovered that engagement is highly valued by contemporary organisations. It reflects employees' well-being at work and enhances both their individual and overall organisational performance. Therefore, understanding how to cultivate employee work engagement within a company is of significant interest to academics and managers. However, relatively few studies investigate how organisational interventions can positively influence employee work engagement (van Ingen et al., 2021).

The meaning of work "has been identified as a potential contributor to job satisfaction" [Steger Moades et al., (2017), p.62]. "For work to be meaningful, individuals must be able to identify significance in their actions, reflecting personal values and beliefs" [Negri et al., (2022), p.1904]. Initial research has identified job meaning as a powerful driver of career satisfaction and a negative predictor of burnout; meaning was also associated with higher job performance. Positive psychology has provided content to the meaning of work. Positive psychology is the scientific study of what makes people's lives most worth living (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). In the work domain, Steger Moades et al. (2017, p.62) "conceived of job meaning as a motivational variable interacting with positive affectivity."

2.3 Work as a significant source of happiness

Philosophers' earliest writings delved into the benefits of positive thinking and the quest for happiness (Judge and Ilies, 2004). In contemporary society, many will contend that work is the cause of their stress, reduced time with family, limited involvement in community activities, and obstacles to furthering their education. Seligman (2002) argues that happiness can be developed by recognising and utilising individuals' strengths, such as kindness, creativity, humour, optimism, and generosity. "The notion of happiness at work is becoming increasingly important for human resource management research. Despite the widespread existence of different constructs that capture positive attitudes, a comprehensive measure of individual-level happiness is necessary" [Salas-Vallina and Alegre, (2021), p.461].

POB fosters strengths, well-being, and a positive mindset within the workplace to enhance individual and organisational performance (Seligman, 2002). By emphasising traits such as optimism, resilience, and proactive problem-solving, organisations create environments where employees are more engaged and satisfied. This, in turn, contributes to overall happiness at work. Employees who experience POB are more likely to feel valued and motivated, leading to increased job satisfaction and productivity. Ultimately, a positive organisational culture supports individual happiness and drives collective success, making it a crucial component of a thriving workplace.

2.4 Positive organisational cultures and the impact on employee satisfaction and performance

"Organizational culture is a system in the form of attitudes, values, behavioral norms, language that is formed and developed by members of the organization as the personality of the organization" [Rahmat and Christina, (2024), p.540]. The research suggested that

when organisations have a positive organisational culture, employee performance will increase by being more innovative and inculcating more positive habits.

A research study by Setiani et al. (2023) examined the effect of organisational culture on employee satisfaction and performance. The results showed a positive relationship between organisational culture and employee performance. Furthermore, job satisfaction, organisational culture, and performance all have complicated and multifaceted relationships; thus, there is a need for further analysis. Organisational culture influences how employees perceive their responsibilities and their level of commitment. Considering the critical roles of POB, organisational culture, and firm performance, this study examines the relationships among these factors as a way to achieve sustainable competitive advantages.

3 Theoretical framework

The authors propose several frameworks to study current working professionals across industries, age, years of experience, and job functions. POB, EE, employee retention, and employee motivation theories are primarily used as the main theoretical frameworks. Social exchange theory provides a theoretical foundation for investigating the phenomenon.

3.1 Social exchange theory

As explained by Anwar et al. (2023, p.94), “social exchange is an exchange of both material and/or nonmaterial goods that involves no less than two parties” and a framework for reciprocal exchanges between leaders and employees. Generally, individuals choose to join an organisation with the expectation of receiving certain benefits. As cited in Hurtienne et al. (2022, p.140), “in applying social exchange theory, an employee’s contribution of engagement sets the expectation that the employer will reciprocate by providing something positive for the employee, continuing the cycle. In understanding the relationships among POB, EE, employee retention, and performance, employers should be aware of these relationships in the workplace to create positive social exchanges.”

4 Research methods

In building theories to explain POB practices that impact employee experiences, engagement, retention, and performance, the theoretical perspectives are relevant in applying to organisations globally. The research questions, therefore, are focused on employee experiences in workplaces using a cross-section of employees representing different occupations, industries, types of organisations, genders, and age groups.

4.1 Research paradigm

“A paradigm is a concrete, definitive scientific achievement, law, theory. Normal science tends to deepen its knowledge” [Kuhn, (1977), p.12]. The research paradigm used in this

research is post-positivism. The authors have chosen a post-positivism paradigm to emphasise meaning and include social perspectives. “Post-positivism does not aim to disapprove the scientific/quantitative elements of positivism in the research; rather, it emphasizes a proper understanding of the directions and perspectives of any research study from multi-dimensions and multi-methods” [Guba, (1990), p.18].

4.2 Research participants

Researchers sent surveys to 750 professionals in different industries representing a cross-section of the workforce. There were 257 completed responses, resulting in a 34% participation rate.

4.3 Sample and data collection

Data were collected from mid to senior managers across the USA to test the relationships among the variables. A stratified sampling method was used to ensure that participants represented as many industries as possible, generations, different length of tenure in positions, professional interests, and genders. The participants were asked to complete the questionnaire through a Qualtrics survey. Participation was entirely voluntary and confidential. Appendix provides a complete list of the questions used in the survey.

4.4 Data analysis

Descriptive statistics, correlational research, regression analysis, and other statistical tools were used to describe, summarise, and analyse the data.

4.5 Measures

- *Happiness*: “Happiness is an emotional state that is important to most people in their everyday work lives, and humor and fun can offer one way of attaining this positive state” [Plester and Lloyd, (2023), p.218].
- *Commitment*: “Affective commitment refers to the employees’ identification with, involvement in, and emotional attachment to the organization. Continuance commitment relates to the employees’ recognition of the costs of leaving the organization. Normative commitment is the employees’ loyalty or moral obligation toward the organization” [Chooi et al., (2018), p.623].
- *Satisfaction*: “Job satisfaction refers to how satisfied an employee is with their current job position” [Hasanah et al., (2024), p.678].
- *Performance*: “Employee performance is a level of achievement related to the results (output) of the implementation of tasks given by the organization” [Mahendra and Kurniawati, (2024), p.194].
- *EE*: “Employee engagement, as defined above, provides an overview of how well employees feel connected to the company and how well they collaborate with their coworkers” [Wardiansyah et al., (2024), p.220].

4.6 Reliability test

Cronbach's alpha was utilized to test for reliability. This method evaluates "the reliability of scores and ratings estimators" [Becker, (2000), p.1171].

5 Results

Surveys were sent to more than 750 professionals across the country. The authors received completed surveys from 257 with some information missing for some of the surveys completed. Table 1 provides an overview of the descriptive statistics of some of the variables included in the survey instrument.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Std. deviation</i>
How likely are you to leave your company within the next two years?	2.75	233	1.390
To what extent does work provide HAPPINESS for you?	3.57	257	0.859
To what extent does work provide PLEASURE for you?	3.21	255	0.947
To what extent does work provide GRATIFICATION for you?	3.74	250	0.962
To what extent does work provide FULFILLMENT for you?	3.78	248	0.974
To what extent does work provide SATISFACTION for you?	3.51	247	0.932
To what extent do you view work as an opportunity to build friendships, and develop wholesome relationships with others at work?	3.28	233	1.085
To what extent do you view your work as a means to helping achieve your life's purpose?	3.70	233	1.147
To what extent do you believe that when there is a relatively strong alignment between an employee's work and purpose of life, this will lead to higher employee satisfaction, greater commitment to the organisation, and better individual and firm performance?	4.35	230	0.832
To what extent do you find happiness through and at work?	3.96	228	0.933
For the following characteristics, please indicate the level that best describes your current state of being – happiness	4.00	233	0.873
For the following characteristics, please indicate the level that best describes your current state of being – pleasure	3.61	233	0.946
For the following characteristics, please indicate the level that best describes your current state of being – gratification	3.91	233	0.922
For the following characteristics, please indicate the level that best describes your current state of being – fulfilment	3.86	233	0.952
For the following characteristics, please indicate the level that best describes your current state of being – satisfaction	3.79	233	0.941
What is your current level of work engagement?	4.25	244	1.046
How likely are you to leave your company within the next two years?	2.75	233	1.390
To what extent does work provide HAPPINESS for you?	3.57	257	0.859

Participants showed a relatively high level of engagement with a mean of 4.25. All measures were on a scale of 1–5 with 5 being most positive. Individuals were less likely to leave their current organisation with a mean score of 2.75. In general, there was a strong belief that when there is a relatively strong alignment between an employee’s work and purpose of life, this will lead to higher employee satisfaction, greater commitment to the organisation, and better individual and firm performance. This proved true in this research with participants strongly expressing such belief with a mean score of 4.35.

Of high significance, participants viewed work as a significant source of happiness, gratification, and fulfilment. Pleasure was not ranked as high. Work is generally viewed positively as a way to helping to achieve one’s life purpose.

Table 2 Correlations among key variables

<i>Q13 – gender, Q14 – generation cohort, Q1 – work providing happiness, Q6 – engagement</i>						
<i>Variable</i>	<i>Variable2</i>	<i>Statistic</i>				
		<i>Correlation</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Lower CI</i>	<i>Upper CI</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Q13	Q6	–0.179	227	–0.302	–0.049	
	Q1	–0.147	227	–0.272	–0.017	
Q14	Q6	0.109	227	–0.021	0.236	
	Q1	0.176	227	0.046	0.299	

Notes: Correlation analysis among gender, generational cohort, work as a source of happiness, and level of engagement were specifically a focus to determine any relationships, if any. Correlation of gender with happiness and engagement showed negative correlation while generational cohort showed a positive correlation. Missing value handling: PAIRWISE, EXCLUDE, CI level: 95.0

Figure 1 Correlation results of variables (see online version for colours)

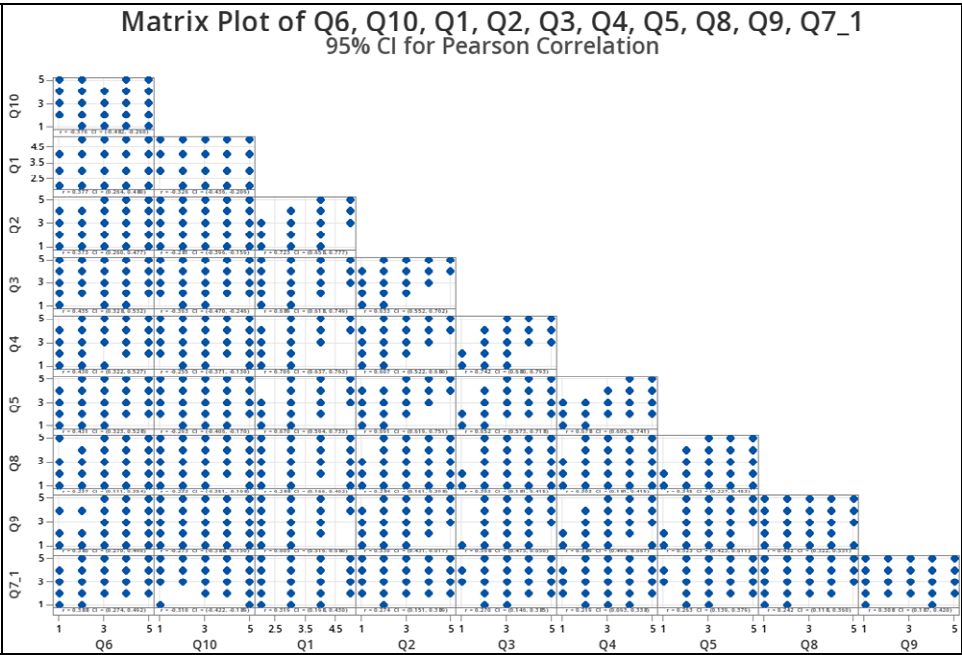


Table 3 Covariances

<i>Q6</i>	<i>Q10</i>	<i>Q1</i>	<i>Q2</i>	<i>Q3</i>	<i>Q4</i>	<i>Q5</i>	<i>Q8</i>	<i>Q9</i>	<i>Q7_1</i>	
Q6	1.09									
Q10	−0.55	1.93								
Q1	0.34	−0.40	0.74							
Q2	0.37	−0.37	0.62	0.90						
Q3	0.44	−0.49	0.60	0.60	0.93					
Q4	0.44	−0.35	0.62	0.58	0.71	0.95				
Q5	0.42	−0.39	0.56	0.63	0.59	0.64	0.87			
Q8	0.27	−0.35	0.27	0.29	0.32	0.32	0.35	1.18		
Q9	0.47	−0.44	0.61	0.58	0.63	0.67	0.57	0.54	1.32	
Q7_1	0.36	−0.38	0.24	0.23	0.23	0.19	0.22	0.23	0.31	0.76

Table 4 Coefficients

<i>Model</i>	<i>Unstandardised coefficients</i>		<i>Standardised coefficients</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Beta</i>		
1 (Constant)	1.442	0.342		4.217	<0.001
What generational cohort do you identify with?	0.074	0.074	0.057	1.000	0.318
For the following characteristics, please indicate the level that best describes your current state of being – happiness	0.091	0.113	0.074	0.807	0.420
For the following characteristics, please indicate the level that best describes your current state of being – pleasure	−0.187	0.107	−0.165	−1.740	0.083
For the following characteristics, please indicate the level that best describes your current state of being – gratification	0.136	0.115	0.116	1.187	0.236
For the following characteristics, please indicate the level that best describes your current state of being – fulfilment	0.448	0.113	0.398	3.968	<.001
For the following characteristics, please indicate the level that best describes your current state of being – satisfaction	0.168	0.113	0.148	1.487	0.139

Notes: ^adependent variable: based on the following employee engagement definition, how do you describe your current level of employee engagement?

5.1 Employee engagement

The results show a relatively high level of EE. Even though employees are engaged currently, the mean score of how likely employees are to leave the organisation within

the next two years is 2.75. This clearly shows that even though employees are engaged, they are still maintaining options for exploring different professional opportunities.

Employees are seeking to find joy and happiness at work. “In any team environment, joy arises from a combination of harmony, impact, and acknowledgment – all of which business leaders can engender in their organizations” [Liu, (2019), p.3]. This study establishes that employees are pursuing happiness at work, and correlation and regression analyses found that employees would be inclined to leave the organisation if they do not find the happiness they are seeking.

Organisations may have historically placed emphasis on building friendships at work, but the study showed there is not a high significance placed on friendship to be engaged or to be happy. Employees finding gratification from their work is more significant and brings a deeper and inner level of satisfaction. This highlights the impact of meaningful work itself and attests to the job characteristics model relevance.

A further review of factors impacting EE shows happiness a being most impactful to engagement through a regression analysis among multiple factors as outlined in Table 4.

5.2 Purpose of work and the relationship to satisfaction, commitment, and performance

“Employment appears to influence employees’ sense of purpose, insofar as work roles can provide life direction and allow individuals to fulfill meaningful aims or have regular goal-related activity engagement” [Weston et al., (2021), p.146]. This research fulfils some of the existing gaps in the literature explaining the relationships among purpose of work with employee satisfaction, commitment, and performance. Managers’ and leaders’ core roles are not about affection but ensuring fair pay, supporting their success, and caring about their well-being (Harvard Business et al., 2019).

Table 5 Work and relationship to life’s purpose

<i>What is your employment status?</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Std. deviation</i>
Part-time (under 40 hours)	3.42	24	1.381
Full-time (40 hours or above)	3.69	193	1.111
Not employed	4.50	10	0.972
Total	3.70	227	1.148

Notes: To what extent do you view your work as a means to helping achieve your life’s purpose? *what is your employment status?

Table 6 To what extent do you view your work as a means to helping achieve your life’s purpose?

<i>Alignment among work and purpose of life with impact on performance</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Std. deviation</i>
Very weak	1.00	4	0.000
Weak	2.60	5	1.817
Neutral	2.79	14	1.051
Strong	3.60	90	1.003
Very strong	4.00	117	1.050
Total	3.69	230	1.151

The results showed that participants valued work and highlighted work as indicative in part to their life purpose. Full-time employees and those not currently employed ranked this factor higher than current participants working on a part-time basis. One can “argue that in order to provide their employees a basis for worthwhile work, a business must have a purpose in accordance with the end user thesis” [Silver, (2023), p.826]. Employees having a purpose aligned to the mission of the organisation will find a deeper sense of purpose of their work aligned to their self-defined life’s purpose.

5.3 *Work as a significant source of happiness*

“Happiness is an emotional state that is important to most people in their everyday work lives, and humor and fun can offer one way of attaining this positive state. Although workplace fun and humor can have a positive impact and create happiness, they require safe conditions and a supportive work climate to flourish” [Plester and Lloyd, (2023), p.218]. This study explored the relationships among generations, engagement, employment status, gratification, and job satisfaction on happiness.

Table 7 Model summary

<i>Model</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R-square</i>	<i>Adjusted R-square</i>	<i>Std. error of the estimate</i>
1	0.823 ^a	0.677	0.666	0.509

Notes: ^apredictors: (constant), to what extent does work provide SATISFACTION for you?, what generational cohort do you identify with?, which industry most closely aligns with your current employer?, how likely are you to leave your company within the next two years?, to what extent does work provide GRATIFICATION for you?, to what extent does work provide PLEASURE for you?, to what extent does work provide FULFILLMENT for you?

5.4 *Positive organisational cultures and the impact on employee satisfaction and performance*

POB can “enhance workplace dynamics, fostering a healthier and more productive environment. It can lead to improved employee morale, increased job satisfaction, and stronger team collaboration. Additionally, POB often correlates with higher levels of innovation, adaptability, and overall organizational performance” [Solao, (2024), p.3]. Job satisfaction is a fundamental concept in the field of organisational psychology research, recognised for its substantial influence on both individual and organisational performance and further developed to POB. This research explored the impact of a positive organisational culture on employee satisfaction and performance. Previous research findings have established “employees and organizational performance, and organizational culture are highly correlated. Employees working in a conducive environment have a positive attitude towards the job and a sustainable relationship with the organization” [Hashmi et al., (2020), p.304].

The data analysis among key variables relating to organisational culture, performance, and employee satisfaction showed significant relationships. There were especially strong correlations between satisfaction and life purpose and building friendships at work with achieving life’s purpose. Relationships have been discussed as important factors in leadership but have not been statistically proven with frequency. This study has established the value of having strong relationships at work as a way to build

organisational cultures that foster ways to develop stronger teams, create a higher level of engaged workforce, and improve performance.

Table 8 Coefficients^a

<i>Model</i>	<i>Unstandardised coefficients</i>		<i>Standardised coefficients</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Beta</i>		
1 (Constant)	0.459	0.247		1.860	0.064
What generational cohort do you identify with?	0.102	0.044	0.095	2.330	0.021
Which industry most closely aligns with your current employer?	0.012	0.013	0.039	0.955	0.341
How likely are you to leave your company within the next two years?	-0.033	0.028	-0.051	-1.162	0.247
To what extent does work provide PLEASURE for you?	0.308	0.057	0.330	5.434	<0.001
To what extent does work provide GRATIFICATION for you?	0.169	0.060	0.189	2.837	0.005
To what extent does work provide FULFILLMENT for you?	0.268	0.057	0.306	4.701	<0.001
To what extent does work provide SATISFACTION for you?	0.072	0.059	0.078	1.218	0.225

Notes: ^adependent variable: to what extent does work provide HAPPINESS for you?

This finding is especially timely as millions of people suffer from loneliness. More than 300 million people globally do not have a single friend, according to Gallup data. And more than 20% of people do not have friends or family they can count on whenever they need them (Clifton, 2022). A recent Forbes article stated the “data is clear that mental health and well-being are significantly driven by connections – from superficial acquaintances to deeper relationships. And work is one of the most important opportunities to find friends, build bonds and enhance interactions which contribute to your fulfillment” [Brower, (2024), p.1].

5.5 Positive employee characteristics and the impact on performance and engagement

Each employee “has individual characteristics that are different from one another. In general, individual characteristics are attitudes, perceptions, and abilities possessed by an individual that is different from other individuals” [Winoto Tj, (2022), p.215]. The data analysis using correlation and regression showed that employee characteristics have a significant impact on employee performance and their engagement. Individual employee characteristics will also impact the decision to leave the organisation thus, employee retention and turnover. These all lead to the performance of the organisation.

Table 9 Correlations

<i>Control variables</i>			<i>To what extent do you view work as an opportunity to build friendships, and develop wholesome relationships with others at work?</i>	<i>To what extent do you view your work as a means to helping achieve your life's purpose?</i>	<i>To what extent does work provide SATISFACTION for you?</i>
How likely are you to leave your company within the next two years?	To what extent do you view work as an opportunity to build friendships, and develop wholesome relationships with others at work?	Correlation	1.000	0.394	0.298
		Significance (two-tailed)	.	<0.001	<0.001
		df	0	230	230
	To what extent do you view your work as a means to helping achieve your life's purpose?	Correlation	0.394	1.000	0.482
		Significance (two-tailed)	<0.001	.	<0.001
		df	230	0	230
	To what extent does work provide SATISFACTION for you?	Correlation	0.298	0.482	1.000
		Significance (two-tailed)	<0.001	<0.001	.
		df	230	230	0

6 Discussion

When only 15% of employees identify as fully engaged, research and practice communities have the opportunity to take major steps forward in improving the working conditions and experiences of the workforce. This research intended to explore the complex interplay among EE, motivation, individual performance, and the mediating role of POB. Specifically, this study sought to delve deeper into the specific mechanisms through which POB might influence these relationships.

Our findings suggest POB practices in organisations will significantly impact the culture, EE, employee motivation, and, ultimately, performance. These results contribute to the existing literature by adding new theoretical concepts, identifying key relationships, and building on previous research. The nature and value of relationships at work present new evidence, especially as many employees and organisations are choosing remote work. The manner in which we create these relationships and be able to capitalise on the in-person interactions have to be created through dedicated initiatives in a remote work environment. The risk of not doing so will be less engagement and organisational citizenship among other consequences.

Table 10 Coefficients^a

<i>Model</i>	<i>Unstandardised coefficients</i>		<i>Standardised coefficients</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>Beta</i>		
1 (Constant)	1.442	0.342		4.217	<0.001
For the following characteristics, please indicate the level that best describes your current state of being – happiness	0.091	0.113	0.074	0.807	0.420
For the following characteristics, please indicate the level that best describes your current state of being – pleasure	−0.187	0.107	−0.165	−1.740	0.083
For the following characteristics, please indicate the level that best describes your current state of being – gratification	0.136	0.115	0.116	1.187	0.236
For the following characteristics, please indicate the level that best describes your current state of being – fulfilment	0.448	0.113	0.398	3.968	<0.001
For the following characteristics, please indicate the level that best describes your current state of being – satisfaction	0.168	0.113	0.148	1.487	0.139
What generational cohort do you identify with?	0.074	0.074	0.057	1.000	0.318

Notes: ^adependent variable: based on the following employee engagement definition, how do you describe your current level of employee engagement? Definition: employee engagement is the amount in which employees are willing to invest in the success of the organisation.

As a society, we are focusing on employee well-being. Loneliness and isolation are realities for many in organisations, especially in a remote work setting. Mental health and well-being are significantly driven by connections – from superficial acquaintances to deeper relationships. Work is one of the most important opportunities to find friends, build bonds and enhance interactions which contribute to your fulfilment (Brower, 2024).

The observed connections among POB core values including gratitude, happiness, pleasure, fulfilment, and satisfaction and the relationships to engagement level, life purpose, and intent to leave the organisation are clear. POB practices have mediating impact on these outcomes so positive leadership, positive culture, and valuing the strengths of individuals are imperative to influencing the attainment of a more engaged workforce and be able to retain key talent. By fostering a workplace environment characterised by supportive leadership, positive communication, employee recognition, etc. organisations can potentially benefit from increased employee motivation, higher levels of engagement, and improved individual performance.

Fulfilment stands out as the most significant predictor of EE, with higher levels of fulfilment significantly associated with higher levels of engagement. Contrary to popular belief, one's happiness level does not significantly predict EE in this model. Pleasure

levels from work do not significantly predict EE. Gratification shows a positive relationship with EE, but like happiness and pleasure, it is not statistically significant. Fulfilment indicates a strong positive relationship with EE, and it is highly statistically significant suggesting that higher levels of fulfilment significantly predict higher EE.

POB continues to play a critical role in enhancing employee performance and organisational success. By cultivating a positive work environment, promoting employee well-being, and leveraging strengths-based approaches, organisations can create a culture that fosters high levels of job satisfaction, engagement, and commitment among employees. Investing in POB not only benefits individual employees but also contributes to improved organisational performance, innovation, and competitiveness in the marketplace further highlighting POB as a key driver of success in today's dynamic business environment.

6.1 Implications to research

POB has emerged as a significant area of interest in organisational research due to its potential to enhance EE and performance as demonstrated in this research. Understanding the implications of POB relationships to engagement and performance research is crucial for advancing organisational theory and practice. This section discusses several key implications for research in this domain:

- 1 *Multidimensional approach:* Researchers should adopt a multidimensional approach to studying POB, recognising its various dimensions such as psychological capital, job satisfaction, work engagement, and organisational commitment. By examining these dimensions separately and in combination, researchers can gain a comprehensive understanding of how different aspects of POB influence EE and performance.
- 2 *Longitudinal studies:* Conducting longitudinal studies is essential for understanding the dynamic nature of POB relationships over time. Longitudinal research designs allow researchers to examine how changes in POB variables affect EE and performance outcomes, providing insights into the causal mechanisms underlying these relationships.
- 3 *Mediating and moderating factors:* Investigating mediating and moderating factors can enhance our understanding of the mechanisms through which POB influences engagement and performance.
- 4 *Contextual factors:* Consideration of contextual factors is vital for understanding the generalisability and applicability of POB findings across different organisational settings. Future research can examine how cultural, industry, and organisational context influence the effectiveness of POB interventions and their impact on engagement and performance.
- 5 *Intervention strategies:* Research on POB should focus not only on understanding its effects but also on identifying effective intervention strategies for promoting POB in organisations. Experimental and quasi-experimental studies can help evaluate the effectiveness of various POB interventions, such as strengths-based coaching, positive feedback, and employee recognition programs, in improving engagement and performance outcomes.

- 6 *Individual differences*: Recognising individual differences in employees' responses to POB interventions is essential for tailoring organisational practices to meet diverse needs. Research should explore how factors such as personality traits, demographic characteristics, and work preferences moderate the relationship between POB and employee outcomes.
- 7 *Outcome measures*: Researchers should use a diverse range of outcome measures to assess the impact of POB on EE and performance. In addition to traditional measures such as job satisfaction and productivity, researchers could explore outcomes related to employee well-being, creativity, innovation, and organisational citizenship behaviour.

6.2 *Implications to practice*

HRD remains relevant due to those that take research and apply the findings to practice; this research project considers the practical outcomes. The implications of POB relationships to engagement and performance extend beyond research and have significant implications for organisations. Understanding how POB influences EE and performance can inform organisational practices and strategies aimed at fostering a positive work environment and enhancing organisational effectiveness. Here are some key implications for organisations:

- *Creating a positive work environment*: Organisations can leverage POB principles to create a workplace culture that promotes positivity, resilience, and well-being. By cultivating an environment where employees feel valued, supported, and empowered, organisations can enhance job satisfaction, morale, and overall happiness.
- *Enhancing EE*: POB is closely linked to EE, which refers to the level of commitment and enthusiasm employees have towards their work and the organisation. Organisations that prioritise POB are more likely to have highly engaged employees who are motivated to contribute their best efforts, take initiative, and go above and beyond their job requirements.
- *Improving performance and productivity*: Research has shown that positive work environments positively impact employee performance and productivity. When employees feel positively engaged and supported, they are more likely to be productive, innovative, and committed to achieving organisational goals. This can lead to improved business outcomes, increased profitability, and sustainable growth for the organisation.
- *Strengthening organisational culture*: POB can serve as a foundation for shaping and strengthening organisational culture. By promoting values such as optimism, trust, collaboration, and resilience, organisations can cultivate a culture that fosters mutual respect, open communication, and a sense of belonging among employees. A strong organisational culture aligned with POB principles can attract top talent, retain employees, and enhance the organisation's reputation as an employer of choice.
- *Supporting employee well-being*: POB encompasses factors that contribute to employee well-being, including psychological capital, job satisfaction, and work-life balance. Organisations can implement policies and practices that support employee

well-being, such as flexible work arrangements, wellness programs, and employee assistance initiatives. By prioritising employee well-being, organisations can reduce stress, prevent burnout, and promote overall health and happiness.

- *Building resilience and adaptability:* In today's dynamic and uncertain business environment, organisations face constant challenges and disruptions. POB equips employees with the psychological resources and resilience needed to navigate change, overcome obstacles, and thrive in the face of adversity. Organisations that foster a culture of resilience and adaptability are better positioned to innovate, grow, and succeed in the long term.
- *Driving employee retention and satisfaction:* POB has been linked to higher levels of employee retention and job satisfaction. Employees who experience positive work environments are more likely to remain with the organisation, exhibit lower turnover rates, and speak positively about their experiences to others. This can reduce recruitment costs, improve employee morale, and strengthen employer branding.
- *Promoting leadership effectiveness:* Effective leadership is essential for promoting POB within organisations. Leaders who demonstrate positive behaviours, such as empathy, authenticity, and servant leadership, can inspire trust, motivation, and engagement among their teams. Organisations can invest in leadership development programs that equip managers and supervisors with the skills and competencies needed to cultivate POB and drive performance.

In conclusion, embracing the principles of POB can have far-reaching implications for organisations, ranging from creating a supportive work environment to enhancing EE, performance, and organisational effectiveness. By prioritising POB, organisations can foster a culture of positivity, resilience, and well-being that benefits employees, customers, and stakeholders alike.

7 Limitations

- *Causality:* Much of the existing research in this area relies on cross-sectional designs, making it difficult to establish causal relationships between POB, engagement, and performance. Longitudinal studies are needed to better understand the temporal sequence of these relationships and to determine whether POB leads to improved engagement and performance or vice versa.
- *Self-report bias:* This study relied on self-reported measures of engagement, performance, and other constructs, which may be subject to bias. Employees may provide socially desirable responses or overestimate their levels of engagement and performance, leading to inflated results.
- *Generalisability:* Future research should aim to replicate findings across diverse settings to ensure their applicability to a broader range of organisations.

8 Future research

Future research on POB relationships to engagement and performance could explore several promising avenues to advance our understanding of this dynamic relationship. Here are some potential directions for future research:

- *Longitudinal studies:* Conduct longitudinal studies to examine the long-term effects of POB on EE. By tracking changes in POB variables and engagement over time, researchers can better understand the causal mechanisms underlying this relationship and identify critical intervention points for fostering sustained engagement.
- *Mediating mechanisms:* Investigate the mediating mechanisms through which POB influences engagement. Examine how factors such as job resources, social support, meaningful work, and organisational culture mediate the relationship between POB and engagement and explore their implications for employee well-being and performance.
- *Technology and virtual work:* Explore the impact of technology and virtual work arrangements on POB relationships to engagement. Investigate how remote work, digital communication tools, and flexible work arrangements influence employees' experiences of positivity, connectivity, and engagement in virtual environments.
- *Cross-cultural research:* Conduct cross-cultural research to examine how POB relationships to engagement vary across different cultural contexts. Explore cultural differences in the conceptualisation and manifestation of POB constructs and investigate their implications for EE and performance. Future research on POB relationships to engagement and performance holds great promise for advancing our understanding of how positive organisational practices influence employee well-being, performance, and organisational effectiveness. By addressing these research directions, scholars can contribute valuable insights to both theory and practice in the field of organisational behaviour.

9 Conclusions

Organisations that work on improving EE will observe their workforce working collectively toward the mission, vision, and KPI's of the organisation, allowing the leaders to witness a higher level of all three P's in EE: passion, productivity, and performance (Hurtienne et al., 2022). This study of POB and its relationships to EE and performance holds significant promise for enhancing our understanding of organisational dynamics and improving workplace outcomes. Through a comprehensive review of existing literature and empirical evidence, this research provided new knowledge on the critical role that POB plays in shaping employee attitudes, behaviours, and performance within organisations. Employees who experience positive work environments characterised by supportive leadership, meaningful work, and opportunities for growth are more likely to be fully engaged in their roles and committed to organisational goals.

Moreover, the findings show a positive impact on employee performance and productivity. Engaged employees who feel valued, empowered, and motivated are more

likely to demonstrate higher levels of job performance, creativity, and innovation, leading to improved organisational outcomes and sustainable competitive advantage.

These findings have significant implications for organisations seeking to enhance EE and performance. By prioritising POB principles and fostering a culture of positivity, resilience, and well-being, organisations can create an environment where employees thrive, contribute their best efforts, and drive organisational success.

Appendices/Supplementary materials can be obtained under https://qfreeaccountssjc1.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cuA87acQoefqcaq.

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